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This is a summary of the activities conducted at the Minneapolis Work Opportunity Center during the period of May 1966 through June 1968, during which time the staff worked to give fresh starts to emotionally disillusioned youth. The objective was behavior modification. The goal for students was to find new insights into their role in society; and for the staff to find new ways to contact and assist in modifying old patterns of behavior. The emphasis in this report is on phases of the center's program which differentiate it from the offerings and techniques commonly found in the conventional schools. A description of the students involved is given. The curriculum is discussed along with a description of the counseling and guidance techniques, services of the school, orientation, costs, and studies pertaining to students withdrawing from the center. Observations prove that this center has had a positive effect upon those participating in its program as many hae finished school, changed attitudes and taken jobs. (Author/GG)

ED 030893

The Minneapolis Work Opportunity Center

A Summary

of

Activity and Research

for the period

May, 1966

to

June, 1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Minneapolis Work Opportunity Center is, in many ways, a unique educational venture. During the past twenty-four months since the inception of the program, the staff has reached out into the community and has offered another and fresh start to educationally disillusioned youth.

Any new program, which has as its objective the modification of behavior patterns deeply embedded in individual personalities, will have its share of successes as well as disappointments. The goal for all should be learning. For students, new insights into their role in society. For staff, new ways to reach, hold and successfully assist in modifying old patterns of adjustment.

This report is an attempt to chronicle the activities and costs of the Work Opportunity Center through an analysis of a series of studies completed over the period 1 May, 1966 through 3 May, 1968. Emphasis is on phases of our program which differentiate it from the offerings and techniques commonly found in the conventional schools.

OBJECTIVES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

Skill training, related academic subjects, job orientation, counseling, and attitudinal modification are at the core of the Center program. All energies are focused on assisting each person as an individual deserving of every opportunity for success. This principle is translated into a number of specific procedures.

1. Outreach: seek out youth who could benefit from the Program.
2. Personalized schedule: individualized course work to be completed at a pace set by pupil and teacher.
3. Motivational devices: techniques aimed at the satisfaction of student needs as they relate to learning.
4. Curriculum development: design, conduct, and evaluate new approaches to subject matter. Share these with other schools of all types.
5. Counseling: provide supportive counseling as student progresses in his work. Help him to know himself.
6. Work attitude orientation: what is required of a good employee.
7. Skill training and related subjects.
8. Job placement and follow-up.
9. Referrals: each student should have the opportunity to obtain needed help whether at the Center or from other agencies.
10. Continuous evaluation: study the effectiveness of every phase of operation. Share meaningful results with the community.

STUDENTS

Many studies have been conducted in an effort to respond to questions concerning the type of adolescent who seeks the services of the Center. Information has been gathered on the neighborhoods in which they live, student personality traits, health status, academic background, home environment, and the extent of participation in the WOC program.

Number of Students

Students were first admitted to the Center in September, 1966. The initial group of eleven enrollees concentrated on developmental work in reading, mathematics and communications. Additional students joined this program until it numbered 45 on December 31, 1966. As the technical skills areas began operating, recruiting procedures were accelerated. The last areas were opened for class during April, 1967. At that time our enrollment had reached a total of 250. Up to date enrollment and attendance studies chart our growth.

Total number of students who came to the Center for an interview since September, 1966. (This number includes repeaters - those who come once, disappear, and return weeks or months later)	1,830
Students who were interviewed, and who attended orientation.	1,271
Students who finished orientation and completed a program of training.	879

Personality

Students were asked to respond to a list of adjectives which could be used to describe oneself. The self-perceptions of our clientele differed

significantly from the ways which achieving students rate themselves. Our students generally perceive themselves as lazy, a rebel, one who postpones, impatient, nervous, reckless, etc.

A series of incomplete sentences was presented to incoming students from April, 1967 through May, 1967. Stimuli consisted of openings relating to school, the future, home, self, others. The responses of a sample of 35 enrollees were analyzed by a panel of four counselors. Answers were assigned a negative, neutral, or positive tone. Though responses to several of the 20 open-ended sentences were more often positive than negative, the majority of the responses were negatively slanted.

As part of Orientation during February, 1968, a group of 56 enrollees were asked to fill out a form containing a series of questions concerning the particular job to which they aspired. When asked whether they would be willing to spend the time necessary to prepare for the job, 91% responded "yes". Seventy-nine percent said they have or could develop the personal qualifications for the job, and 77% thought their chances for advancement were good or excellent. These responses come from a group who average less than 7 academic credits (28 needed for graduation from high school), and whose median age is 17 years. The incongruity of these evaluations of self, when contrasted with those given above, are evident.

Each teacher was asked at some time during the past months to prepare a report on his or her area of instruction. A section on "student characteristics" was included in each report. Culling through these descriptions, a number of traits seem to be repeated by the majority of reporters:

- Dejection by past experiences.

- Appear suspicious or surprised when praised.
- Short attention span.
- Bring home tensions and personal problems to class.
- Poor self-image.
- Need for correct diet, exercise, posture, good-grooming and training in human relations.
- Poor retention.
- Negative attitudes toward work.
- Poor conceptualization of career goals and job obligations.
- Need and want direction in learning.
- Respond well to a friendly, low-pressure environment.
- Tend to be loners at first.

Health Status

The majority of students who enroll in the Center undergo a complete physical examination at the Hennepin County General Hospital. Follow-up services are provided either at the hospital or by the student's personal physician. Two studies were conducted relative to the results of the examinations.

During the period 1 February, 1967 through 30 November, 1967, 174 students were examined. Of these, 75 students (43%) required referrals other than dental. The nature of the referrals were varied, including psychiatric, eye, ear, orthopedic, and obesity. Of the 75, only 57 students accepted a total 99 referrals. During the same ten month period, 260 public school N.Y.C. students, in the same socio-economic group as our clientele, were referred for physical examinations. Of this group, only

65 (25%) needed further medical treatment. When this 25% is compared to the 43% of our students, the difference in percentage is significant at the .01 level.

During a more recent study covering the period 3 January 1968 through 24 April 1968, 105 students received physicals. Over 207 referrals have been made as a result of these tests.

Educational Background

The educational experience of a person is most frequently judged as the number of credits earned, the number of years of schooling, degrees obtained, etc. With such criteria, our clientele appear poor indeed.

As part of an in-depth study of our first 42 students (March, 1967) the following data was collected:

Average number of credits 6

Median number of credits 6

Range 0-23

50% had completed less than one semester of senior high school work (5 credits)

80% had completed less than one year of senior high school.

On the average, each student was 24 credits or 2½ years away from a diploma.

Monthly studies of new enrollees present a more heterogeneous picture than the one presented above. Data collected during the first 16 months (above group included) of student enrollment presents the following picture:

5% of those admitted were high school graduates.

18% of those admitted were classified as seniors.

41% of those admitted were classified as juniors.

33% of those admitted were classified as sophomores.

3% of those admitted were classified as 9th graders.

This proportion has been maintained during the first four months of 1968 with minor fluctuations.

Mobility may be a potent factor in school dropouts. In the study of our first 42 students it was found that half of the group had attended six or more schools, with a high of 15. Seventy percent of the children of minority families had been in at least five or more schools.

Change in the composition of our student body exerts an effect on the counseling and instructional programs. In these areas of student assistance, several new programs are presently being conducted and evaluated. The outcome may provide a more realistic procedure in helping youth become successes.

Home Background

Two reports have shed light on the family environment of our students. During March, 1967 an in-depth study was made of the first 42 students to enroll and matriculate at the Center. The study was made to provide the faculty with as much information about our clientele as was possible to give. The second analysis was based on a random sample of 71 students enrolled in the program after January 3, 1968. The majority of this group are still coming to class.

	Living with both parents			Parents divorced, separated, one parent dead		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
First 42 Students M = 32 F = 10	64%	44%	59%	36%	56%	41%
Jan. '68 - April '68 Sample M = 45 F = 26	33%	35%	34%	60%	58%	59%

In a study of 60 students belonging to racial minorities (18% of student body), the following data was presented:

- 41% were living with both natural parents.
- 38% had one parent missing due to divorce, separation, or death.

Previous Schools

The Center has enrolled dropouts from every one of the 11 other high schools in Minneapolis. Two of the schools, one in a "depressed" area, the other on its fringes, account for about 45% of our enrollment. Two other target area schools are represented with about 8% each. Parochial and out of city schools are the source of 10%. Thus, approximately 60% of our clientele come from four area schools.

Attendance Patterns

Poor attendance has been a characteristic of the educational experience of most dropout youth. A study of the first 42 WOC students showed:

- 61% were absent more than 15 days per year.
- Number of such absences ranged as high as 60 per year.

A study of 60 students from minority groups showed that:

- 80% were absent more than 25 days per year.
- 50% were absent more than 60 days per year.
- Average attendance was 65%.

An enrollment and attendance study was made covering the first 16 months of Center operation. Some significant findings are summarized:

- When all students are included the average attendance fluctuated around a 40% figure.
- When those attending only once every week or every two weeks were excluded, the average jumped to about 55%.
- No significant differences in the attendance patterns of girls and boys.
- Older students tend to be better attenders.

More recent analyses - January, 1968 through April, 1968 - have shown an upward trend in the attendance curve from the 40% mark to a present figure close to 60%. New techniques of outreach have contributed to this improved figure.

A random selection of 50 students was made from the files of students who have withdrawn from the Center. The average time span of attendance was computed.

	N	Range	Attendance Mean	Attendance Median
Males	36	21 to 253 days	86.3 days (4.5 mos.)	79.5 days
Females	14	18 to 235 days	93.7 days (4.9 mos.)	75.5 days
Total	50	18 to 253 days	88.5 days (4.7 mos.)	79.5 days

During October, 1967 a preliminary study was made of students who withdrew from the Center during the month of September, 1967.

Size of Sample	Average No. of Weeks In Attendance
Males = 15	27.6
Females = 25	19.6
Total = 40	20.7

PROGRAMS

In this section of the summary, studies will be presented which pertain to curriculum, counseling, personal service, coordinators, orientation, and follow-up procedures. Emphasis will be placed on materials and techniques which have been successful with our clientele. Per pupil cost estimates are included at the end of this section.

CURRICULUM

The basic differences between instruction at the Work Opportunity Center and in conventional schools are in the setting and the approach.

The setting is a non-school type building with an informal, relaxed atmosphere. Class size is small. No one is ever "too busy" to give a student some of his time when the student needs it. The unique feature of our "rules and regulations" is that they are either functional or non-existent. A basic requirement is 30 clock hours of instruction in a technical area before a program change can be made. Other than that, decisions are made by students, with all the help they need or will accept from teachers, counselors, social workers, coordinators, clerical staff and administration.

The approach focuses on the individual. His needs are paramount. Each student is accepted as he is. His level of achievement or performance is determined, not assumed. He is taken from where he is, and is taken as far as he will go in the shortest possible time. No instructor or student is burdened with a standardized curriculum or a fixed set of materials. Grades are not given. Content is broken down into small instructional units in order to provide continuing positive reinforcement and to avoid frustration. Successes, however insignificant, are emphasized. Instructors are sincere in their efforts with students for two reasons: 1. Teacher selection was based largely upon the possession of this characteristic of sincerity and, 2. An instructor without a sincere approach would soon have an empty classroom, for the only "hold" he has on his students are the relationships he can establish with them. These positive relationships are not always easy to establish, in fact, are not established at all in some cases (we have our dropouts, too).

The results of this kind of an approach are satisfying when evaluated in terms of positive attitudinal changes over a period of time. An outstanding example is the fact that in a school population where approximately one-fourth of the students are on probation or parole, and nearly all have dropped out of the conventional school, there has not been one discipline problem in a classroom or training area.

Common Techniques

1. Teacher-student talks. Teachers endeavor to determine where a student is, achievement-wise, and works with him from that point.
2. Subject matter content is broken down into short instructional units, one-half to two or three hours in length.

3. Students are praised for completing a short unit. They receive awards of merit for completing groups of units three or four weeks in length.
4. Students are often allowed to make their own choice as to what materials they will read or study.
5. Work and a record of progress is frequently kept up to date by the student. Self-evaluation - kept in individual student folders.
6. Teachers encourage students to move on to a more difficult task when success has been achieved on an easier one.
7. Open door policy - a student may come in anytime either to work or ask a question.
8. Frequent, well organized field trips. Students decide where to go and what to look for.
9. Students are required to make written comment on what they read - little correction - emphasis on expression - teacher learns from and about student.
10. Good attendance is encouraged - emphasis is placed on days attended, not days missed.
11. In some areas students are occasionally given blocks of work and allowed to progress as fast as possible.
12. Students keep own attendance by signing in and out of class.
13. Students are urged to call in when they are going to be absent. If they don't call, the instructor or outreach worker calls the student.
14. Classroom atmosphere is informal, relaxed, conductive to self-expression. Adverse competition is all but eliminated.
15. Student participation in planning the next day's work increases attendance.

16. Success is increased greatly when class size is kept small. This permits more individual attention, closer supervision, and programs of instruction tailored to individual needs and rates of learning.

17. Incoming students are given a brief test to determine reading level. Instructors are made aware of the student's reading ability. Student may also be programmed into a remedial reading situation.

18. Student and teacher work out the fine points of scheduling - agree on short and long-term goals.

19. Programming the student and the jobs through the shop in a manner followed in industry.

20. Length of class periods and courses are flexible - depends on student proficiency and attitude.

21. Accept each individual as worthy regardless of the negative personality characteristics he may possess.

22. The use of advanced students to assist in the instruction of newer students has positive effects on both.

23. Establish a "helping" relationship..."I am going to help you get ready for this job." This approach emphasizes "partnership" in learning.

24. Get the students "doing" as soon as possible.

25. Two or more training areas cooperate in teaching several phases of a course, e.g. Dry Cleaning - Distributive Ed. - Home Ec. (sewing).

26. Lecturing, preaching, bossing, or threatening by instructor is avoided.

27. No homework is assigned unless student expresses a desire for it.

28. Most technical areas require very little reading or written work. Emphasis is placed on performance.

29. New students enter the program every week.

30. Students in food preparation plan a menu for the week and then prepare all of the food - cafeteria-classroom is open to the public.

31. When a student exhibits greater than average interest in an area or department he is encouraged to specialize.

32. Regular office desks and equipment are used in Business Education. Room is arranged like an office.

33. Test each student for reading level when they enter the Work Opportunity Center.

34. Students are encouraged to underline words or phrases in paperbacks or magazines. Instructor then goes over these with student.

35. Never tell a student he is not capable of doing something. Present realistic alternatives.

36. Never react negatively or emotionally.

37. Be kind to each student. Stress the positive. Care about them.

38. Personalize instruction, post their pictures or portraits (pencil sketches). Admire their dress and comment favorably if it is in good taste.

39. Encourage them to get more education.

40. Use of tape recorder for improving oral language usage.

41. Show a student a process, then let him try it by himself. Come back and show him again if necessary. If he had difficulty he will be much more receptive the second time.

42. Manikin used for student demonstration work in nurses aide classroom.

43. Overhead projector used for small group presentations.

44. Students receive practical experience in a hospital or nursing home under the supervision of the instructor.

45. Demonstrations and/or experiments are carried out by student or instructor. This has the effect of motivating students to try their hand at another art-form.

Materials Used

1. Short, teacher-made, materials on a variety of topics.
2. Pamphlets and paperbacks.
3. Programmed materials are used with more accelerated students and are supported by individual discussions and problem solving sessions.
4. Materials in related subjects are selected and are directed toward the student's vocational interest area.
5. Newspapers and a large selection of current magazines.
6. Trade and industrial publications.
7. A wide variety of Government Printing Office publications.
8. An individual study sequence in psychology. Promotes self-understanding.
9. Series of questions, the answers to which can be found in current magazines, pamphlets, almanacs, atlases or filmstrips.
10. Materials with large print are selected more often than those with small print.
11. Teachers use selected sections from books that are good rather than using the whole books.
12. Language lessons using local examples and student written sentences.
13. Retail sales language lessons using D. E. materials and taught in D.E. area.
14. A capitalization card game designed by the students and instructor.

15. Programmed texts used in a few areas to polish basic skills.

16. A series of mounted polaroid pictures to show the steps in a process.

17. Sound filmstrips used in several areas with projectors that are designed for viewing by one to three persons. Student operated.

18. New words are being learned in reading through the use of a modified tape recording machine utilizing cards with a strip of magnetic tape attached (Bell & Howell Language Master).

19. Films and sets of slides produced by industry are available for loan or purchase - several areas use them.

20. Teacher designed training guides in checker-cashier and dry cleaning counter girls are used successfully.

21. Pre-recorded vocabulary on tapes for work on pronunciation.

22. Samples or portions of garments are made up showing steps and/or techniques of clothing construction. These are displayed on a series of flip charts.

23. Production printing jobs are accepted from outside organizations <u>if</u> they can be fitted into the training schedule.

24. Students browse and select books on art. They are encouraged to take these home for reading. If book is a paperback they may keep it.

<u>Motivational Devices</u>

Many new and exciting techniques have been devised to keep students motivated. Much of the success of the program can be traced to the versatility and penchant for creativity in our staff. Some of the most successful of the devices are briefly explained here.

1. Polaroid Camera - Pictures are taken of the student at the beginning of a sewing project, as it progresses and at its completion. These pictures along with samples of the material and different details are mounted on an accordian pleated story board. Students stop frequently to look at their progress and the progress of others. They also get great pleasure out of bringing in their friends to show them what they have accomplished.

2. Successful Student Display - A large bulletin board upon which is displayed a close-up snapshot of each student who has gained clerical employment after having attended the Work Opportunity Center and has taken business training. A caption under the picture simply lists his name, place of employment, and the type work being performed. Some are depicted by two photos in a "before" and "after" set up. Prospective and beginning business students seem highly motivated by this display as they see the success being enjoyed by those portrayed.

3. Chart of Learning Units - A chart is on display in the business room depicting the various courses being offered. These courses are subdivided into fractional parts or learning units. The unique feature of the chart is in the visual subdividing. It is greatly simplified so that the student is not threatened by a feeling of insurmountable course work. Credit or check off is made early and quickly after the completion of the most rudimentary accomplishment. This is recorded on the business student's record card. As the student progresses through the learning units, credit and check off is given at specific junctures.

4. Student Projects - Student owned engines and private non-school engines receive much more enthusiasm than do school training engines.

5. Time Clock - Most small engines students become hourly employees. A timeclock was introduced as a training device. Use of this clock has motivated students toward better attendance. It has also simplified record keeping and provides a quick, line of sight reference showing who is in the shop.

6. Art Shows - Several Art Shows have been set up at W.O.C. and at other places around the city. Work that is on display is also for sale. Student finds greater reward in the fact that people actually liked his work well enough to buy it -- money received seems to be secondary.

7. Field Trips - Trips to art museums, galleries, studios, exhibits, theatres, hikes and/or sketching, trips to dancing studio, farm, river, city, zoo.

8. Short Term Assignments - Short term assignments have been found to be one of the better motivational devices in that the student will begin the assignment if he can see the end.

9. Timeclock - A time clock is used in the Distributive Education Classroom as it would be used in a place of business. Each student "punches" in or out for class as they would on a job. A student is assigned a rate per hour to calculate his earnings. Problems in determining deductions are also used. As a student advances from Basic, to Intermediate, and Advanced, his salary rate goes up.

10. Checklist - A checklist of assignments, worksheets, projects, meetings, and activities is maintained. As each student in the class completes the activity a checkmark is put in the proper square. All items on the checklist are to be completed before the end of a course.

11. Awards of Merit - The award of merit is used in the Distributive Education and Homemaking Departments. The awards are issued to students for attending various series of classes and for completing certain tasks and assignments.

12. Books Expendable - This is a program which makes paperback books of all types freely available to the students. Several hundred volumes are on display, in bookstore-type wire racks, in the Reading Center. Students have complete freedom of choice in selection and are not required to seek permission before withdrawing a book. They are, however, encouraged to return the book when they have finished with it and to "swap" it for another. New titles are added each month to keep the collection up-to-date and to stimulate interest.

13. Insignia - Kitchen divided into five levels of accomplishment. Sleeve stripes awarded students for performance and attendance in various levels, also informs the public of the student's position in the kitchen. Students attend and perform to be promoted from one level to another. Promotion based on agreement of Instructor and student department head. Voted on by entire kitchen staff.

14. Award of Merit - This award is given after the completion of a certain achievement or after spending a certain number of hours with much growth and progress in our area. Making many colors available for matting purposes gives more desirability to the award.

15. Path to Charm - On "The Path To Charm" sheet, students plot their course with various colored stars as they complete units of study. Pictures made with the Polaroid camera inserted inside a felt paper frame add recognition and a personal touch which the students need so desperately. Pictures are taken as girls progress on the path and are used to replace previous pictures in the frames.

16. Point System - Because English is a high school requirement, credit is the final goal of students. A point system is used for continual reinforcement, record keeping, and evaluation. A fifty point reading requirement is part of the work for the first credit; the second credit is equal to ninety class hours worth of work.

17. Written Contract System - Students enter into a written contract with counselors, teacher and others concerned. It "binds" both the student and the staff. He agrees to attend for a specific number of class hours, a specific number of days per week with the contract written for a relatively short period of time, depending on the resources of the student.

18. Consultations - Individual and group consultations with students help eliminate grievences, improves attitudes, improves attendance, and makes the student feel important. Also helps instructors determine student needs, desires, etc. and do a better job of referral to other departments.

19. Re-Organization of Service Station - Peg board for tools - shelving for oil, etc. - rearranging of impulse sales items, painting back room and office, complete change of salesroom and office area. Helped establish a proprietory attitude in students - its "our" or "my" station now.

20. Uniforms - Maintain an adequate supply of uniforms and lockers at the Service Station and Food Services. This provides clean uniforms at all times. Has definitely been a motivating factor.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES

1. Traditional Counseling and Guidance Techniques Seem at Times Inappropriate in the Centers Program.

Both individual and group counseling approaches have been used in the program. However, the most effective counseling technique tends to be the individual counseling interview. In this regard, approximately fifty percent of the individual counseling contacts are on a self-referral basis.

Non-direct, client-centered, or relationship approaches do not appear to be as effective as more active and directive techniques. Many of the students want direction and expect outside imposed limits. They tend to balk at any attempt to move until they are strongly encouraged to do so or, to say the least, strongly encouraged to do something.

These students, by leaving high school before completion, are often rebelling against many types of authority figures and school failures. They profess to being very capable in meeting their needs. And yet, after a year and a half, we have come to the conclusion that our students are in greater need for direction than the students who are able to complete their high school education. The counselors have found it necessary to be quite direct in helping the student set up short-range and long-range goals. Furthermore, definite limits with continuous follow-up must be used.

Sociobehavioral approaches seem to be relatively effective. When short term behavioral goals are identified and reinforcement techniques are employed, the students generally make progress. The concept of extinction in the sociobehavioral approach also is valuable. When a student comes to the counselor to unburden troubles, discuss family crises, and expand on his negative feelings about himself, he is encouraged to concentrate rather on the positive aspects of his present environment and success. A stress is placed on a bright future rather than a dismal past.

2. The Role of the Counselor at the Work Opportunity Center Varies in Many Ways from the Role of a Counselor in a Conventional School.

Primary in this regard is the non-administrative status of the counselor. At the Center, the counselor is part of a team working to help the student and is not burdened with administrative responsibilities as he would be in a conventional school. The counselors at the Center are not so deeply involved in granting and counting high school credits,

discipline problems, failure notices, class transfers, and other minor responsibilities that are unique to each school. The counselor is able to expend more time and energy on helping a student evaluate his own skills, interests, desires, performances, and experiences.

Work Opportunity Center counselors are responsible for a smaller number of students than are counselors in the conventional school. The students at the Center require continuity and follow-up, services that are impossible in the conventional school because of the great number of students with which the staff must deal. Although the total number is small, the counselor's time used for follow-up is extensive.

3. Written Contract System

Students enter into a binding written contract with counselors, teacher and others concerned. It binds both the student and the staff. He agrees to attend for a specific number of class hours, a specific number of days per week with the contract written for a relatively short period of time, depending on the resources of the student.

PERSONAL SERVICE

Case Work

The staff has not been developing new techniques in case work so much as applying existing knowledge and discovering which methods and techniques are most applicable to the unique situation of the Center.

It has been found, for instance, that it is most necessary to be very available to our students, almost like "demand feeding." Our students are, on the whole, quite immature and seek immediate help for immediate problems

and do not respond well to being held to regular appointments. We have also found that the "life space interview" is very useful and necessary with our students. The "life space interview" is the type of interview that takes place in the hallways, on the stairways or wherever the opportunity for being involved with a student presents itself.

Initially, the staff centers most of their attention on identifying problems and making appropriate referrals to various community resources. At this point, they are much more inclined to do the case work themselves because it has been found that so many of our students and their families simply do not follow through with the initial referral and that they continue bringing their concerns and problems to us. The staff is well aware that this can be argued in many different ways but for whatever it is worth, they are definitely leaning now in the direction of doing more of the case work job themselves.

Group Work

The group work program is leaning heavily on behavior modification theory and is being integrated into the classroom situation. The instructor and the group worker become partners in working out the total classroom operation.

Because of the fluid nature of our student population, the group workers have to be greatly flexible and work with their group whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself. The groups cannot be counted on to keep regular, scheduled appointments. A group worker and the school nurse have teamed up as instructors in a sex education program. This is a very good combination and goes over very well with our students. The school nurse is

basically responsible for presenting the anatomical and physiological facts, and the group worker helps the students ask personal questions and discuss their feelings about the material presented. The group worker is attuned to those individual students who evidence more than the ordinary amount of concern or conflict about this subject and the group worker takes responsibility for seeing that these students receive some individual attention.

A group worker has been responsible for the Students Advisory Committee which has been one of the very best means of helping some students. The contribution that the Student Advisory Committee has made to the Center has been substantial and important, but probably more important is the value that participating in this group has proven to be to the individual student. By and large, our students are students who have not participated to any great extent in extra-curricular activities. The value of using a group worker to sponsor this committee is that he utilized group work skills in enabling the individual students to become full, participating members of the committee.

Outreach and Recruiting

One of the most useful techniques that our neighborhood aides have used in helping new students get started here at the Center is to provide transportation for the first few days or weeks. We have found that many students who do not get started on their own will respond to this very personal attention.

Neighborhood aides have been assigned to certain instructors to work closely with them around attendance problems. The instructor informs the aide each day about those students he believes should have some form of

personal contact before his absence develops into a more serious problem. This technique is proving to be very effective and workable.

WORK COORDINATORS

The coordinators have almost two years of experience with the clientele of the Center. Many of their original techniques have been modified as a result of feedback from students, faculty, and employers.

Rapport With Employers

Call on old and new contacts in the Metropolitan Area and explain the program - 12 month school, flexible scheduling, kinds of students we are working with, their availability for jobs.

Explain to employers that the students come to the Center with a very poor self-image and have faced failure more often than success.

Getting Acquainted With Students

Work on attitudes. Explain to students that they are hired on skills learned, but 99% of the time they are fired because of their incapability of getting along with co-workers and having a bad attitude. Instill ideas of dependability, reliability, honesty and cooperativeness with school and employer. Pre-test students - in the business area we give vocabulary, numerical, figure aptitude, general clerical, etc. - to determine weaknesses and also to make it easier for them when tested on the job.

Student is Placed

If students are not coming on time, if they are not groomed properly, if skills are weak, a follow-up is made by the coordinator two or three times a week with teachers, students, and employers.

Explain to students about withholding taxes, social security, vacations, hospital benefits, coffee breaks, etc.

Good supervision on the job and at school is important for the student to mature.

Coordinators also work with graduates who come back for more skills. They are most always looking for full-time work at the end of their training.

The most difficult problem we seem to have is creating the understanding with our students that they are beginners. They want to start at $2 to $4 an hour, when the minimum is $1.60.

We also have to demonstrate to these students that every day is not going to be a "Utopia" on the job. They don't want to get bored, and when they do they are ready to quit the job.

ORIENTATION

The program for orientation of new students has undergone several changes. The first program was designed for a full week. As the result of a thorough discussion with all members of the faculty, the time was cut to three days, then to two days. Time of the week was also changed several times. Thursday and Fridays were utilized, but a number of students failed to return on Monday. A format utilizing the first two days of each week is presently being evaluated. The schedule for these two days consists of group meetings and individual interviews, as well as a tour of the building.

Each new enrollee has his own time sheet, and his appointments are scheduled in such a fashion as to eliminate undue waiting. The present schedule appears to be working as well as can be expected. New approaches

are always being considered.

Staff members feel that:

- The program aids students in communicating. They are less reticent, and more informed about the program they are undertaking.
- Students appear to have better occupational goals.

COST OF WOC AND OTHER PROGRAMS

During the first two years of Center operation - 1 May, 1966 through 30 April, 1968 - a total of $1,126,880.92 has been expended. This figure includes all costs: fixed charges, salaries, equipment, materials, supplies and travel.

During this period of 24 months:

1. 1830 students sought help from the Center.
2. Of this number, 1271 were interviewed and went through orientation;
3. Of this number, 879 completed a course of study and training.

Students who came just for interviews profited from Center services such as counseling, outreach, and some job placements. Approximately 10% of the time of staff members in these areas was spent with this group.

If the group of 1830 was used as a base for estimating cost, the cost per pupil would be:	$ 616.00
If the 1271 figure is used:	1154.00
If the 879 figure is used:	1282.00

A realistic cost per pupil lies somewhere around the $1100.00 mark. Of course, this cost will decrease during the coming year as fixed costs -

rent, equipment - decrease.

A survey was made of other services in the State:

Minnesota State Department of Corrections

	Cost per person for one year
Red Wing (Boys)	$3,263.00
Sauk Center (Girls)	4,434.00
Willow River	2,941.00
Thistle Dew	3,201.00
St. Croix	3,314.00
Rochester	3,646.00
Lino Lakes	6,203.00

The Child Welfare League of America reports that the average cost of care per child in residential treatment centers ranges from $10,000 to $14,000 per year.

Cost of a pupil in the Minneapolis Vocational High School	* $ 985.00
Cost per pupil in the conventional high school	* 647.00

Cost per pupil at the Center compares most favorably with cost in correctional institutions; favorably with that at the Vocational High School. Though our cost is almost twice that of the conventional school, the number of personnel per pupil is almost twice that in a conventional setting.

* Mr. Donald R. Wahlund
Director of Finance
Minneapolis Public Schools

STUDIES PERTAINING TO STUDENTS WHO WITHDREW FROM THE CENTER

The objectives of the Work Opportunity Center focus on preparing youth for suitable occupations as well as a successful adjustment to the society in which they function. Several follow-up studies have helped us answer the question, "After WOC - What?"

Reasons For Withdrawing

As each student leaves the Center he has an interview with a counselor, coordinator, or a member of the Personal Service Department. The reason for leaving the program is discussed, and the student is invited to return whenever the staff can be of service to him.

Reasons Given For Leaving
January, 1967 - May 31, 1968

Reason	Percent
Working on a job obtained through our Coordinators	35%
Graduated from High School through the aegis of the Center (this includes 33 students who graduated, plus 10 who received GED diplomas)	4%
Returned to High School	7%
Military Service	5%
Moved from city	6%
*Lack of attendance at the Center	27%
Other reasons: illness, pregnancy, institutionalized, etc.	16%

* The number in this category is diminishing. Outreach workers are contacting students at home and in their recreation spots. They are being

brought back into the program. Reaction by the students is highly positive. They appreciate the special attention and interest they receive.

Returnees to Regular High School

Twenty-six percent of the June-October, 1967 withdrawals returned to a regular high school for a second time. Of these 45 returnees, 60% were boys. Of the 45 who returned, 25 (56%) still attend. The remaining 20 withdrew a second time to work (45%), to return to WOC (35%), or to go into military service (10%). Those who persisted showed a better attendance pattern and earned a significantly higher proportion of passing grades than they did before dropping out of high school. The teachers and counselors of the returnees made positive comments concerning school adjustment for 60% of those who remained and expressed negative evaluations for only 16%.

Sixty percent of those who persisted in school and 41% of those who dropped out again rated WOC as helpful in their decision to return to school. They appreciated the freedom of movement, the special interest shown, and the opportunity to choose a course and work at their own rate.

Attender-Non-Attender Follow-Up Study

Two matched groups of people represent the samples studied. One group came for information and then attended the Center (ATT); the other, made up of dropouts from the same locale and age, came to the Center for information at the same time but never registered for classes (NON-ATT). The original study done in the Spring of 1967, sought out answers to many questions relative to student plans, hopes, etc. In the follow-up study, made six months later, the two groups were compared on a number of important factors. Personal interviews were conducted with 83% of the samples. Of the remaining

17%: 3 were in service, 3 males were incarcerated and one girl was in a special institution.

During the six months between the original study and the follow-up:

- 62% of Att group were employed earned an average of $1.75 per hour.
- 43% of Non-Att group were employed earning an average of $1.60 per hour.
- 53% had earned an average of 4.9 credits each.
- None of the Non-Att group had advanced academically.
- WOC attenders had made progress in occupational training.
- 90% of Att group rated themselves as satisfied with their activities of the past 6 months.
- 38% of Non-Att group were satisfied.
- The majority of both groups felt they were getting along very well on their jobs, "OK" at home, and "OK" with themselves.
- In a self-rating of their futures: 55% of Att group and 20% of Non-Atts felt that their futures was bright.

A Five Month Follow-Up of Students Who Withdrew For Lack of Attendance

A sample was selected consisting of 22 students who gave as their reason for withdrawal - "haven't attended regularly, and want to drop out now." Members of this group were contacted five months after they left the Center.

The outreach workers were able to reach only 50% of the group. The whereabouts of the other half is unknown to neighbors, and even relatives, who have been contacted.

Persons contacted:

Males = 6

Females = 5

- 3 of the boys are working, three are not.
- 2 of the unemployed boys were brought back to the Center for additional courses by the outreach workers.
- WOC has secured jobs for three of the girls.

Job Studies

Upon completion of a Center program, the student meets with the instructor, counselor, and coordinator. If the teacher and counselor feel that the student is ready for a job, the coordinator makes several contacts. The student is prepared for the interviews and a placement is made. As our training program has progressed, more prepared students are finding successful employment.

Jobs Secured
October, 1966 - October, 1967

Type of Program	Boys Working	Girls Working	Total
Distributive	19	11	30
Office		35	35
Trades & Industry	75	34	109
Miscellaneous	5	1	6
Neighborhood Youth Corps	6	7	13
Plans for Progress	15	7	22
Total	120	95	215

October 1967 - June 1968

Distributive	7	29	36
Office	7	47	54
Trades & Industry	129	37	166
Neighborhood Youth Corps	6	7	13
Plans for Progress	22	12	34
*Work Study Program	14	9	23
Total	195	141	336

* Money for this program provided by State Vocational Funds plus school funds on a matching basis.

Work Study Program

A program designed for students who want to attend school, but who need money for bus fare, clothes, etc. Students work at the Center for several hours each day and are paid at the rate of $1.40 per hour. This type of financial assistance has proved a strong factor in maintaining

young people in our training areas.

- 34 have been employed in this program since it was introduced: 19 boys and 15 girls.
- 11 are still working: 6 girls and 5 boys.
- The program has cost only about $950.00 since its inception.
- A work attitudes program is being developed. Students will meet once a week to investigate and discuss the types of adjustment needed to make jobs successful.

Job Placements - A Follow-Up

In July, 1967, a study was made of students who worked full or part-time during the period January 1, 1967 through June 30, 1967. The study focused on two groups:

Work and Attend Center	M	= 54
	F	= 34
Total		= 88

Withdrew from Center to work	M	= 24
	F	= 2
Total		= 26

Results

In general, the Coordinators agree that the student who attends W.O.C. regularly, or fairly regularly, usually has a satisfactory work experience and has been able to hold the job because of regular attendance. Students with irregular attendance patterns think they can act the same on a job and do not last. Members of this group are brought back to the Center for more work in skills and attitude change before being put in another work situation.

The Coordinators are constantly working with employers in evaluating student's performance on jobs. This information is shared with staff members. In most cases, employers are more disappointed with student attitudes, attendance, and a general willingness to work, than they are with the student's level of skill.

Students working full or part-time, and who are attending W.O.C., are receiving valuable training, both on the job and in their training areas. The student who has received training at the Center and who wants to work at his outside job, and who has the proper work attitude, is succeeding. Employers have commented that students with these positive attitudes are among the best employees the companies have had for some time.

We find there is a direct relationship between attendance at W.O.C. and success on the job. Good attendance at W.O.C. provides more hours for training and usually means a more sincere attitude. Likewise poor school attendance is generally reflected in poor job attendance, often resulting in dismissal from the company.

The 26 former students are presently working at their first full-time job, or in some cases, their second or third. Their job success can be traced to proper attitudes, good skill training, and the personal contact with an interested instructor.

Contacts are kept up with this non-attending group. In many cases, Coordinators and Counselors have helped these students concerning future plans, additional training, etc.

Job success is strongly related to positive work attitudes and motivation. Employers will cooperate at great lengths to assist students in their efforts to advance. Students who attend W.O.C. with regularity usually succeed on the job in which they are placed. Those who come occasionally attempt to do the same on their jobs. This behavior results in dismissal. Students who are dismissed from, or voluntarily drop out of jobs, are encouraged to return to the Center for additional help in skill training or attitudinal change.

Conclusions

1. Job success is strongly related to positive work attitudes and motivation.
2. Employers will cooperate at great lengths to assist students in their efforts to advance.
3. Students who attend W.O.C. with regularity usually succeed on the job in which they are placed. Those who come occasionally attempt to do the same on their jobs. This behavior results in dismissal.
4. Students who are dismissed from, or voluntarily drop out of jobs, are encouraged to return to the Center for additional help in skill training or attitudinal change.

A Six-Month Follow-Up: Jobs

During October, 1967 a preliminary study was made of students who withdrew from the Center during the month of September, 1967.

Size of Sample		Average No.of Weeks in Attendance	
Males	= 15	Males	= 27.6
Females	= 25	Females	= 19.6
Total	= 40	Total	= 20.7

Of the above group, 20 withdrew to work at full-time positions. Six months later - in March, 1968 - an attempt was made to personally contact each of these 20.

- twelve (60%) appear to have made an adequate adjustment and are successfully employed.
- seven (35%) have either left the city or have left no forwarding address.

Attitudes and Personality Traits of Job Applicants

In October, 1967 a study was made of student attitudes toward jobs, employer evaluations, and coordinator reactions. The sample of 38 was a

random selection from among the 200 students who had been placed on jobs prior to the cut-off date for the study. A summary of this study is presented.

Summary

The characteristics detected by the Coordinator - immaturity, maturity, shyness, eagerness, good attitudes, poor attitudes, dependence, independence - mediate in the student's personal and inter-personal relationships at school and on the job.

Job mobility, due either to failure or boredom, seems a commonplace in the areas of unskilled or semi-skilled positions that are available to most of our clientele. It appears that the student aspires to a higher paying job for the money alone. They do not consider the training, education, seniority, and other pertinent factors that influence the securing of such positions. Their education in this phase of job orientation must be stressed, and a realization of one's present capacity be recognized.

The consensus of the Coordinators, as expressed in the sample, is a positive one. The vast majority of placements result in a satisfactory experience for both employee and employer. Student growth is evident in many of the cases. Unsuccessful cases have returned to the Center for more work and counseling.

STUDIES AND REPORTS

1 May 1966 - 31 May 1968

The studies and reports referred to in this summary are available to interested parties. Requests can be addressed to the Work Opportunity Center. Titles and publication dates are reproduced here.

Objectives

Initial and Revised Proposals	March, 1966 and December, 1966
Various flyers used for publicity purposes	

Students

Prospective Clients: The Pool of High School Dropouts in Minneapolis	June, 1966
First 12 students: An In-Depth Study	November, 1966
First 42 students: An In-Depth Study	March, 1967
First Minority Group Study	April, 1967
In-Depth Study of Students Admitted during January, 1967	May, 1967
A Study of Students who Attended vs. a Matched Group of Non-Attenders	June, 1967
A Sentence Completion Test: Validity Study	June, 1967
An Adjective Check List: Validity Study	June, 1967
A Study of Student Withdrawals	July, 1967
Second Minority Group Study	October, 1967
Student Eating Habits: Questionnaire	October, 1967
Student Recruiters	November, 1967

Health Status: Reports on Physical Examinations	November, 1967 and June, 1968
Study of Students Enrolled During September, 1967	December, 1967
The Attender-Non-Attender Study:	
A 6-Month Follow-Up	January, 1968
A 16 Month Enrollment and Attendance Analysis	January, 1968
Study of The Effects of a "Waiting to Enroll" List	January, 1968
Returnees to Regular High Schools	January, 1968
Withdrawals: Reasons Given	Monthly Reports
Effects of Group Therapy on Attendance and Achievement	March, 1968
A Five Month Follow-up of Students Who Withdrew After Poor Attendance	March, 1968
Measuring Attitude Change With the Adjective Check List	June, 1968

Programs

Business	Food Services	Reading
Child Care	Graphic Arts	Service Station (Auto)
Creative Art	Homemaking	Small Engines
Distributive Education	Machine Shop	Social Studies
Dry Cleaning	Mathematics	Tailoring
English	Nurse's Aide-Orderly	Welding

The following curriculum techniques and materials are available for each of the above areas:

1. Preliminary Course Descriptions

History of the occupation

Occupational Outlook

Objectives

How objectives can be attained

Instructional units

Glossary of terms

Bibliography

2. Some Successful Techniques and Observations of Student Motivation

Description of the facility

Student characteristics

Successful procedures

Instructor's Remarks

3. Case Studies

General information about the student

Diagnosis and interpretation of problem

Treatment

Results

Prognosis

Attendance Awards - Coupons	Continued evaluation
Achievement Awards - Certificates of Merit	On-going
Food Services Program	January, 1968
Reading Level of Students	August, 1967 June, 1968
Evaluation of Counseling Techniques	March, 1968
Concern Sheets	May, 1968
Initial Orientation Program	April, 1967

Revised Orientation Program	September, 1967
A New Orientation Program	February, 1968
Job Placement Study	July, 1967
Job Placements - A Follow-up	October, 1967
Six Month Study - Follow-up of Workers	March, 1968
Monthly Letters dated last day of each month:	June, 1966 through May, 1968

Reports on activities in the following areas:

- In-Service Programs
- Curriculum
- Counseling
- Personal Service
- Work Coordinators
- Research

Eight Quarterly Reports presenting summaries of pertinent research

CONCLUSION

Even a scanning of the studies and research reports presented in this summary of Center activities will bring out the positive influence our program has had on many of the dropouts and hard to reach youth. Young people have been given training in useful skills, have earned high school credit, have completed graduation requirements, have secured meaningful and satisfying employment, have modified their attitudes toward work, significant others, and themselves.

If securing a position commensurate with one's abilities and becoming a wage earner is a sign of "success", then our work has been worthwhile with two out of three who enroll. Results of studies comparing our students with peers who have not availed themselves of the Center, are a strong and positive affirmation of our purpose and programs.

Staff members are continuously evaluating their own performance. New techniques and materials are tried every day. Students are brought into the evaluation process. It is their criticisms - positive and negative - which so often provide the needed insight to revise. We are not the same staff, nor are our present programs the same as those of last year. Next year, at this time, we hope to know more than we know now.